

Choice Training 1-1: General School Requirements

1. General School Requirements

1.1 Training 1-1:

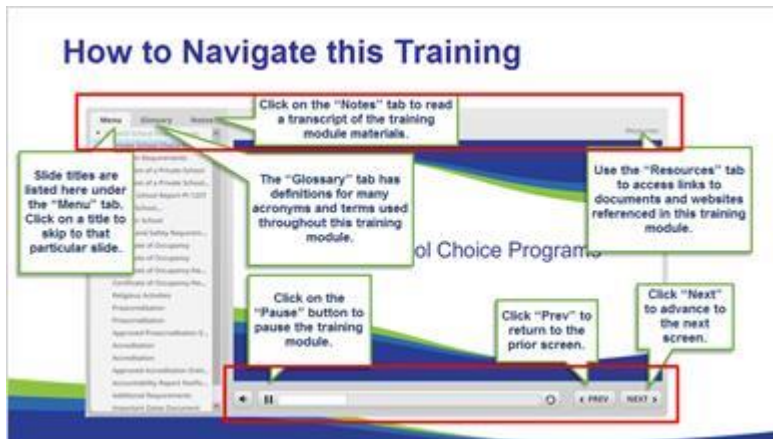


Notes:

Welcome to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's training module on the Private School Choice Programs. We will refer to the Private School Choice Programs as "Choice" or "Choice program" throughout this training. The Choice program is governed by Wis. Stat. §§ 119.23 and 118.60, as well as Wis. Admin. Codes ch. PI 35 and 48. Provisions of this training module are subject to statutory and rule changes. This training module will discuss general school requirements.



1-1.2 How to Navigate this Training Module



Notes:

Before we start, here are some tips and tools you may wish to use when viewing this training.

When listening to this training please note the buttons at the top of the training screen. Titles to all of the slides in this training are listed under the “Menu” tab on the top left of the training screen. You may watch the training in its entirety, or you may skip to a specific slide by clicking on the title of a particular slide.

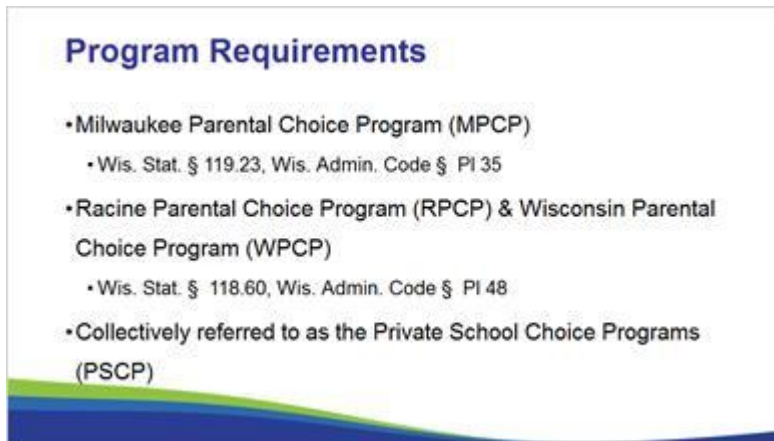
Acronyms and terms that are used throughout this training are defined under the “Glossary” tab on the upper left side of the training screen. If you have any questions about a particular acronym or term that is used in this training, click on the “Glossary” tab to read the definition of that acronym or term.

The “Notes” tab has a transcript of the training materials as they are presented. If you wish to read along with the training, please click the “Notes” tab on the upper left side of the training screen.

We have also posted resources related to this training which can be found under the “Resources” link on the upper right hand side of the training screen.

Next please note the buttons at the bottom of the training screen. If you want to pause on or during a specific slide, please hit the “Pause” button. Clicking the “Prev” button will allow you to return to the previous slide and clicking the “Next” button will allow you to advance to the next slide, if you wish to advance sooner than the auto-timing.

1-1.3 Program Requirements



Notes:

Welcome to the Private School Choice program! We'll be covering many general school requirements in this presentation. All of these requirements for participants in the programs are set in state statutes or administrative rule.

There are three programs that are collectively referred to as the Private School Choice Programs, and they are the

Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP), for the residents of the City of Milwaukee
Racine Parental Choice Program (RPCP) for the residents of the Racine Unified School District

And the Wisconsin Parental choice programs (WPCP) all residents outside the City of Milwaukee and Racine unified School District.

A link to the statutes and administrative rules can be accessed in the resource tab at the top of the training module screen. We invite you to review and become familiar with the rules and statutes governing these programs.

1-1.4 Definition of a Private School

Definition of a Private School

All schools participating in the PSCP must be private schools and meet the definition of a private school under Wis. Stat. § 118.165 (1) requirements:

- Primary purpose of program is to provide private or religious-based instruction.
- The program is privately controlled.
- The program is not operated for the purpose of avoiding or circumventing the compulsory school attendance requirement.
- The program provides at least 875 hours of instruction each school year.

Notes:

To be in the choice program, you must satisfy the definition of private school in Wisconsin. Wis. Statute § 118.165(1) defines what a private school is.


A private school is

- 1) where the primary purpose of your program is to provide private or religious based instruction.
- 2) Is privately controlled, and
- 3) not operated for the purpose of avoiding or circumventing the compulsory school attendance requirement.
- 4) Additionally private schools must provide 875 hours of instruction. However to participate in the choice program a private school needs to provide additional hours of instruction. This will be discussed in a later presentation.

1-1.5 Definition of a Private School (continued)

Definition of a Private School (continued)

- Pupils at the institution return annually to their home for not less than 2 months of summer vacation, or the institution is licensed as a child welfare agency.
- The program provides a sequentially progressive curriculum of fundamental instruction in reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and health.

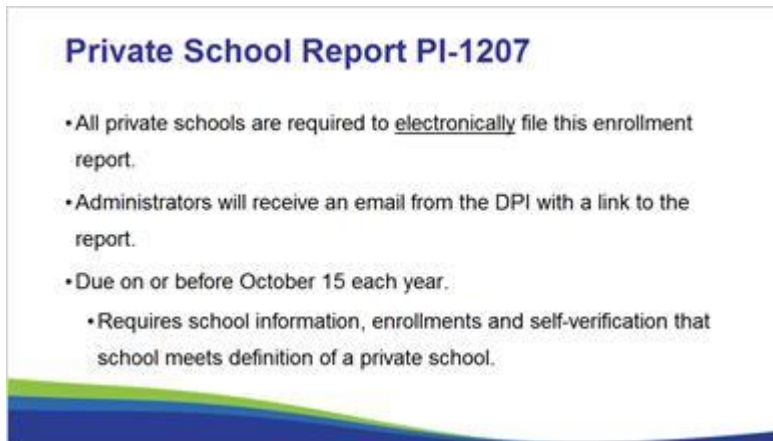


Notes:

Additionally, 5) pupils at your school must return home for at least 2 months of summer vacation, if your school provides boarding. This excludes year round schools that are licensed as child welfare agencies.

And 6) All private schools in Wisconsin must provide a sequentially progressive curriculum of fundamental instruction in reading, language arts, math, social studies, science and health. Schools may also provide instruction in other areas.

1-1.6 Private School Report PI-1207



Private School Report PI-1207

- All private schools are required to electronically file this enrollment report.
- Administrators will receive an email from the DPI with a link to the report.
- Due on or before October 15 each year.
 - Requires school information, enrollments and self-verification that school meets definition of a private school.

Notes:

All private schools in Wisconsin annually file the PI-1207 private school report. This is filed electronically by October 15th of each year, and the school will receive an email on how to file this report.

The PI-1207 is where DPI asks for information about the school's program, enrollments, and asks for self-verification from the school that it meets the definition of a private school.

1-1.7 If Your School...

If Your School...

- Has been open for less than 12 months, or;
- Has fewer than 40 students in 2 or fewer grade levels
- Your school is considered a *new school* and is required to meet additional requirements a year before it can participate in the choice program. However, a new school is not subject to these additional requirements if it is operated by a governing board that operates a private school that is currently participating in the choice program.



Notes:

If your school is a brand new school, being defined as being open for less than 12 months or has fewer than 40 students in 2 or fewer grade levels, additional requirements and separate deadlines will need to be met before your school will be allowed to participate in the choice program.

1-1.8 Summer School

Summer School

- Choice school requirements:
 - Offer a minimum of 19 days of pupil instruction during their summer school term;
 - Provide a minimum of 270 minutes of pupil instruction per summer school day.
- A student must have attended a non-Title I funded course taught at the Choice school's summer school program for a minimum of 15 days.



Notes:



Choice schools may offer summer school. To receive payment for eligible choice students a Choice school must follow the requirements on the screen. You will notify us when you annually register your school by January 10 if you're interested in having summer school for your choice students. If you are a new school you will have to meet earlier deadlines to participate. If you are a new school ensure you communicate your intent to offer summer school to us as soon as possible.

1-1.9 Health and Safety Requirements

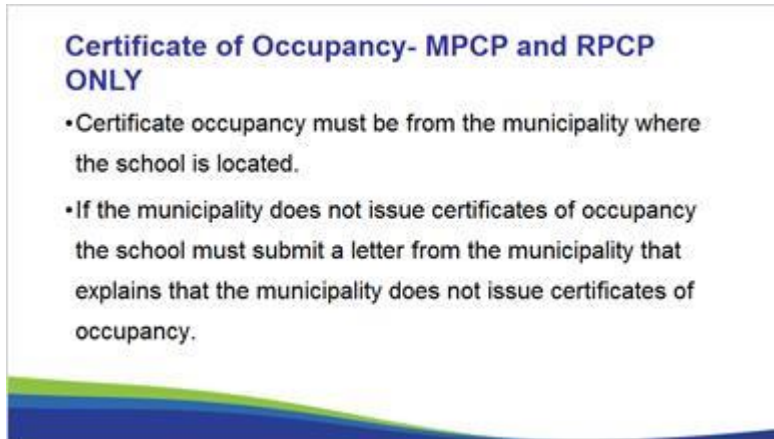


Notes:

All schools participating in the Choice program must comply with all health and safety laws or codes that apply to public schools. This means the school has the required insurance coverage and meets all building code requirements. Insurance requirements are covered more in depth in Training 6 and minimum insurance requirements are posted on our web page. The Insurance Requirements document may be accessed in the resources tab at the top of this training module screen. We recommend you give a copy of the insurance requirements to your insurance agent and get a quote. You will need the cost of the insurance when you prepare your budget. New schools will provide proof of insurance to DPI by August 1st.

Schools that do not meet this requirement cannot participate in the Choice Program for the entire school year.

1-1.10 Certificate of Occupancy



Certificate of Occupancy- MPCP and RPCP ONLY

- Certificate occupancy must be from the municipality where the school is located.
- If the municipality does not issue certificates of occupancy the school must submit a letter from the municipality that explains that the municipality does not issue certificates of occupancy.

Notes:


Schools participating in the Milwaukee and the Racine programs must provide a certificate of occupancy for your buildings. Some adjoining municipalities may not provide a certificate of occupancy, in this case the school must provide a letter to DPI from the municipality that explains they do not issue such certificates.

Providing a certificate of occupancy is not a requirement for schools **only** participating in the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program.

1-1.11 Certificate of Occupancy

Certificate of Occupancy

- Schools must file subsequent certificates of occupancy with DPI prior to student attendance.
- If school moves to a new location or opens a new facility a new certificate must be obtained.
- All school locations must have a certificate of occupancy.
- The certificate must be for school use (not church or daycare).



Notes:

DPI must receive the certificate of occupancy before you use the building. The school needs certificates for all school locations, and the certificate must say it is for “use as a school.” If a school moves to a new location or opens a new facility a new certificate must be obtained.

1-1.12 Certificate of Occupancy-New School Requirements

**Certificate of Occupancy-New School Requirements
MPCP ONLY**

- New schools located in the City of Milwaukee must by May 1 (or March 1 if offering summer school):
 - Submit a copy of the school's validated application for certificate of occupancy; and,
 - Submit a copy of the school's validated application for the Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA), if applicable.



Notes:

If you're a new school to the Milwaukee Choice program you must provide to DPI by May 1 a validated application for the occupancy certificate, and validated BOZA application, if applicable. If you plan on offering summer school, these items are required by March 1.

1-1.13 Certificate of Occupancy-New School Requirements



**Certificate of Occupancy-New School Requirements
MPCP and RPCP ONLY**

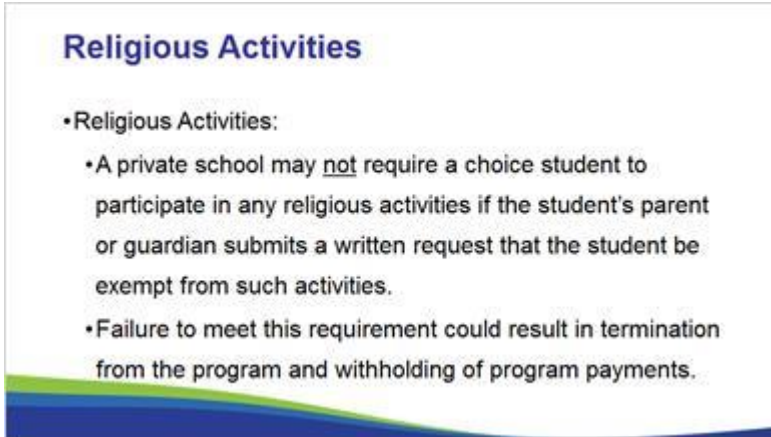
- **All MPCP & RPCP schools** Must file a copy of the school's FINAL certificate of occupancy and capacity placard.
 - By May 1 if offering summer school
 - By August 1 if not offering summer school
- Temporary certificate of occupancy will not meet this requirement.

Notes:

A final Certificate of Occupancy must be received by DPI no later than August 1. Again, if you offer summer school, the permit is due May 1.

Keep in mind a temporary certificate does not satisfy this requirement and your school will not be permitted to participate in the Choice programs.

1-1.14 Religious Activities



Religious Activities

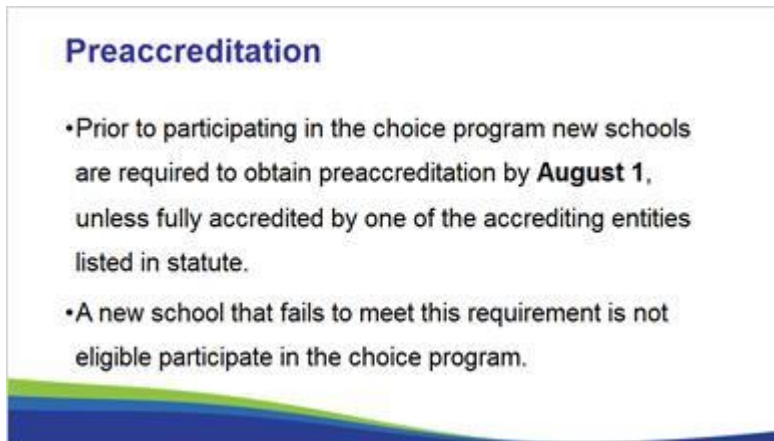
- Religious Activities:
 - A private school may not require a choice student to participate in any religious activities if the student's parent or guardian submits a written request that the student be exempt from such activities.
 - Failure to meet this requirement could result in termination from the program and withholding of program payments.

Notes:

Many schools in the Parental Choice program have religious activities. If a parent submits a written request, the parent may opt their student out of religious activities at your school. The school must provide alternate instruction for the student and the student may not be required to participate in any religious activity.

If your school has graduation requirements that include religious instruction, a parent may opt their student out of such activities. If a parent does so, the school must provide alternative instruction for the student.

1-1.15 Preaccreditation



Preaccreditation

- Prior to participating in the choice program new schools are required to obtain preaccreditation by **August 1**, unless fully accredited by one of the accrediting entities listed in statute.
- A new school that fails to meet this requirement is not eligible participate in the choice program.

Notes:

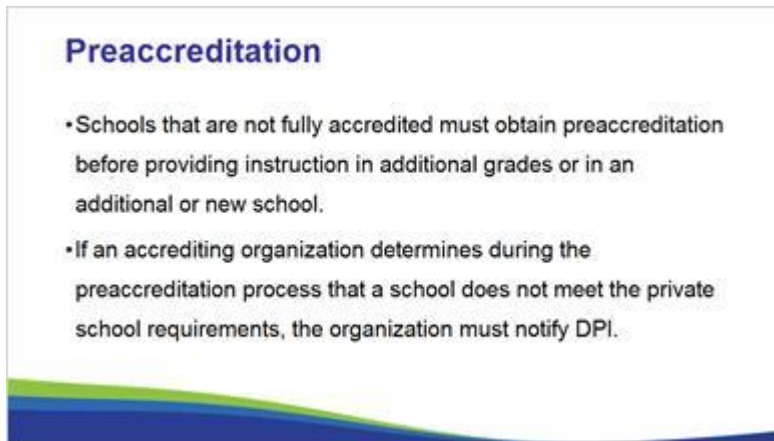
Schools participating in the Choice program for the first time must be preaccredited by August 1, unless already fully accredited. If your school offers summer school, the due date is May 1.

A school may only apply to one preaccrediting entity.

If your school is already fully accredited, provide documentation of accreditation to DPI by August 1.

For information on the preaccreditation and accreditation requirements please refer to the Accreditation Bulletin, a link to our Bulletins Webpage can be accessed in the Resources tab at the top of the training module screen.

1-1.16 Preaccreditation



Preaccreditation

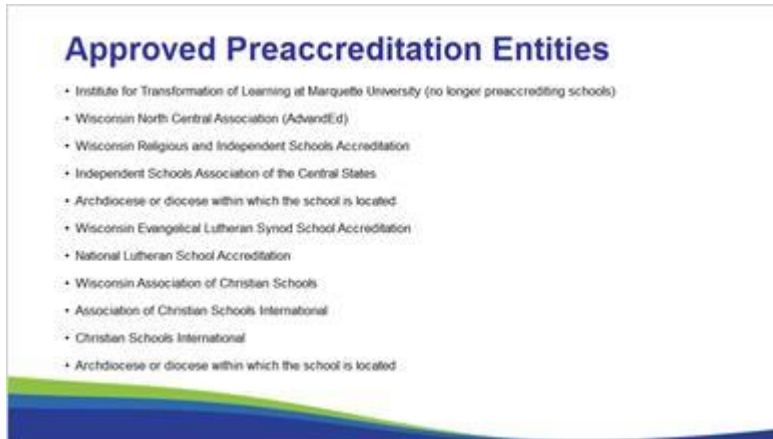
- Schools that are not fully accredited must obtain preaccreditation before providing instruction in additional grades or in an additional or new school.
- If an accrediting organization determines during the preaccreditation process that a school does not meet the private school requirements, the organization must notify DPI.

Notes:

If you are preaccredited and decide to add to your program, such as add a high school, additional preaccreditation is required. Please see the Accreditation Bulletin for more detail.

Your accrediting organization must report to DPI if you no longer meet the requirements of a private school in Wisconsin. A school is ineligible to participate in the choice program if it fails to meet the preaccreditation requirements.

1-1.17 Approved Preaccreditation Entities



Notes:

The statutes list the organizations that may preaccredit Choice schools. However, not all of these organizations may preaccredit schools

Contact the organization as soon as possible, since advanced planning is needed to complete the process. Remember you may only apply to one entity for preaccreditation. Proof of preaccreditation is due to DPI no later than August 1.

1-1.18 Accreditation





Notes:

When fully accredited, all schools, must maintain full accreditation and provide DPI by January 15 with a letter from their accrediting organization confirming that the school continues to be accredited.

Failure to maintain accreditation will result in the school being terminated from the Choice program. The letter must contain certain information. The letter must be dated after July 1st of the current school year, contain the school's name, the school's address for each location, include the grades accredited, and include a statement that the school is or is not accredited as of the date of the letter. The letter must be sign by an authorized member of the accreditation agency.

1-1.19 Accreditation

Accreditation

- New schools:
 - Must apply for accreditation by December 31st of the first year of participation in the Choice program; and
 - Must achieve accreditation by 3rd year following the first year of participation.

Notes:

If not already fully accredited, Choice schools must provide proof of an accepted application for full accreditation from one of the approved organizations. This is due to DPI no later than December 31st of the first year of participating in the choice program.

The school then has up to three years to achieve full accreditation.

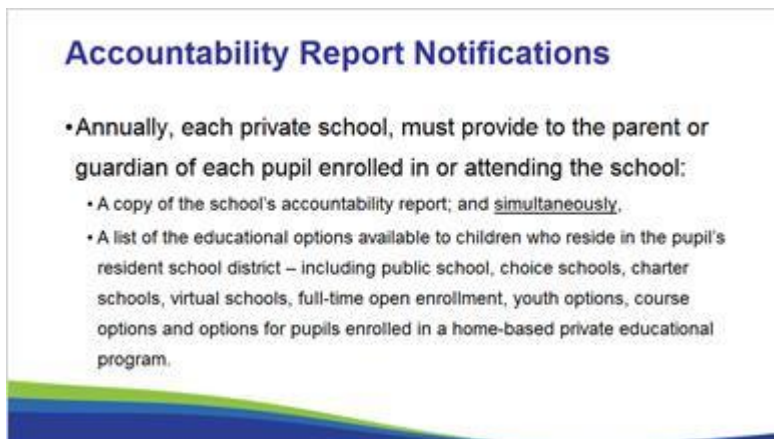
1-1.20 Approved Accreditation Entities



Notes:

This is a list of the accrediting organizations listed in state statute that may accredit choice schools in Wisconsin.

1-1.21 Accountability Report Notifications



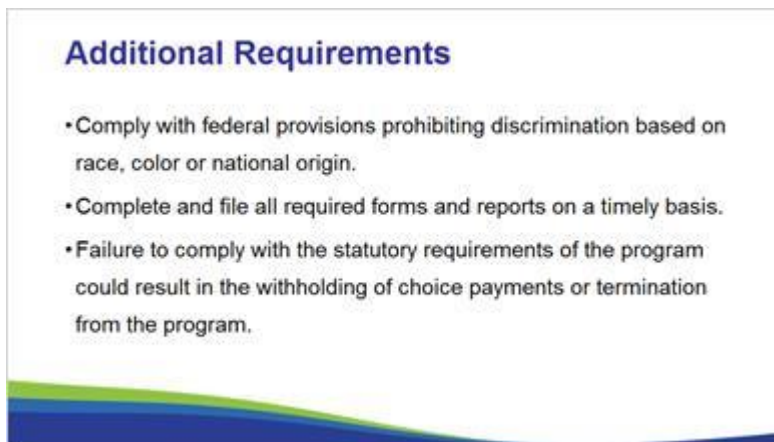
Notes:

Wis. Statute sec. 115.385(2) requires Choice schools to provide parents with a copy of

the school's accountability report and list of educational options available to that parent.

The Department of Public Instruction has a website that includes a link to all educational options available to Wisconsin parents. A link to Wis. Statute sec. 115.385 and Educational Options DPI webpage can be accessed in the Resources Tab at the top of the training module screen.

1-1.22 Additional Requirements



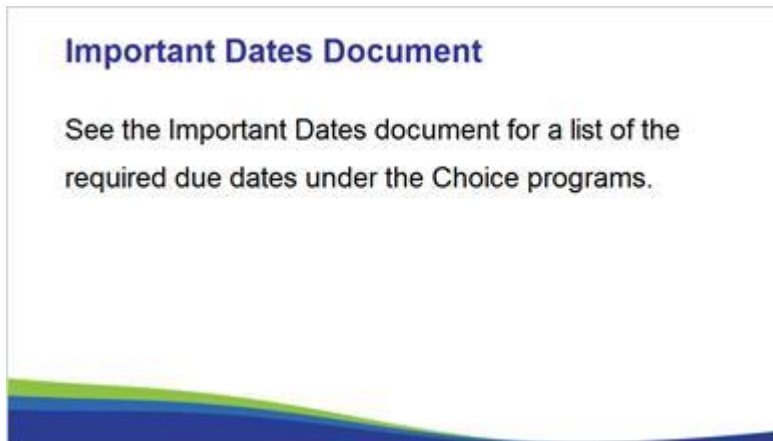
Notes:

Federal law requires schools to comply with provisions that prohibit discrimination based on race, color or national origin.

Make sure you file all forms and reports correctly and timely.

Failure to comply with program requirements may result in withholding funds or termination from the program.

1-1.23 Important Dates Document



Notes:

To assist you in meeting all these deadlines, the DPI publishes an Important Dates document and posts it on our web page. A link to the DPI Choice program website can be accessed in the Resources Tab at the top of the training module screen.

We strongly encourage you to bookmark our Private School Choice Programs-School Information webpage and ensure that you are familiar with this important dates document. State law provides that schools that fail to meet program requirements may have payment withheld and also may be barred from participating in the program.



Notes:

If you have any questions about the information discussed in this training, please see the Private School Choice Programs homepage. The left menu bar of the Private School Choice Programs homepage has resources for both schools and parents.

Choice schools may also contact the Choice team at privateschoolchoice@dpi.wi.gov, or call the toll-free number at 1-888-245-2732, extension 3 with questions.